



Allandale Neighbor

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Crowded Storm Drainage Project Update Meeting reveals project exhaustion

Tom Linehan

The Allandale Storm Drain Project is dragging on and neighbors are upset. They want it finished. The City knows it and is working on a plan to double efforts to complete it as soon as possible.

On Thursday night, November 30, the City of Austin Public Works Department held a public information meeting at the Northwest Recreation Center on the project. The room was packed with Allandale residents and city staff. The City brought over 20 staff, including EMS and the Fire Department representatives, for the meeting. Barbara Rush from Council Member Laura Morrison's office was there as well.

A bit of background. The first problem with the project was the length of time it took to come up with a plan. Streets and homes were being flooded and it took from 2007 until 2011 before the project was started. We will be well into 2012 before the project is completed. The initial plan, announced in 2007, was to construct a storm drain system under White Rock Drive, from Shoalwood Avenue to Shoal Creek. The project was to start January 2008 and be completed in five months. That plan was abandoned once a consultant's report concluded that approach could increase flooding for properties along Shoal Creek. The city came back with the revised plan in 2009; that plan was approved and scheduled for 2011. The project kickoff meeting with the neighborhood occurred November 29, 2010, and construction started January 2011.



Allandale Storm Drain Project Meeting at Northwest Rec November 30, 2011

So far, the project has exceeded its budget seven different times for things like extra signs, additional water line work, paving, and more. The most recent request was for \$223,607 to cover the costs of replacing nearly two miles of curb along the roads where the drainage work has occurred. It is hard to believe this was not considered in the original plan.

Howard Lazarus, Director of the Public Works Department, started Thursday night's meeting by acknowledging neighbors' frustrations. The original timeline was one year. It is going to go well beyond a year, and the big question was how much longer? Lazarus acknowledged

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HAVE YOU RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP?

The next ANA EC Meeting is December 15, 6:30 p.m., at the Northwest Recreation Center, 2913 Northland Drive. The meeting is open to the public.

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TREASURER Diane Swinney
SECRETARY Karen Knight
MEMBERS Bryan Glass, Laura DiCarlo,
Peggy Maceo, Jeff Marshall,
Joi Chevalier, John Keohane,
and Dan Diener. Cynthia
Keohane is the Immediate
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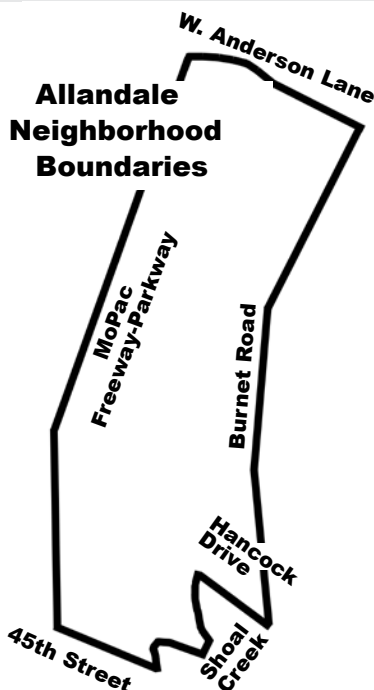
ANA General Meetings are held March and September
on the fourth Thursday.

Committees

BEAUTIFICATION Linnea Lemon
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MEMBERSHIP Dan Diener
NOMINATING Diane Swinney
SAFETY Laura DiCarlo
ZONING AND PLANNING Bryan Glass

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ANA President's Letter

Donna Beth McCormick, ANA President

We have lots to do in Allandale and your help is needed. Especially on committees – parade, garage sale, safety, membership, Safe Routes to School at Lamar, parks and greenspace, zoning, membership, newsletter, and other activities that we might plan throughout the year – and this is just a few of the committees. Committee members must be ANA members, but they do not have to be on the Executive Board.

I'm back for one more year as ANA President. Cynthia Keohane did a stellar job as President while holding a full-time paying job! Many hours were, and continue to be, spent in meetings, as we make sure that Allandale has a voice in the city planning process, development in and around our neighborhood, commercial vacation rentals, zoning, and the ever ongoing traffic through Allandale. We have had some big projects, such as the storm drain project, which has been a

disruption but which will prevent flooding on streets and in yards, as well as the drowning out cars. And – hopefully we will have more rain to test this project!

We have a lot of new houses – I drive down a street, a house from the 50s is gone and there is a very modern looking structure going up. What did the house look like that was torn down? Who lived there? Are the same people building, or do we have new neighbors? I have a hard time remembering what the original house looked like and it is on a street that I drive regularly. Things are moving fast in Allandale and we need to keep up.

We need you. That is the only way we can keep our neighborhood a family-friendly, active and close knit neighborhood where we residents feel safe and free to walk the streets, visit, and have children play in our parks and ride bikes on our streets. ❖

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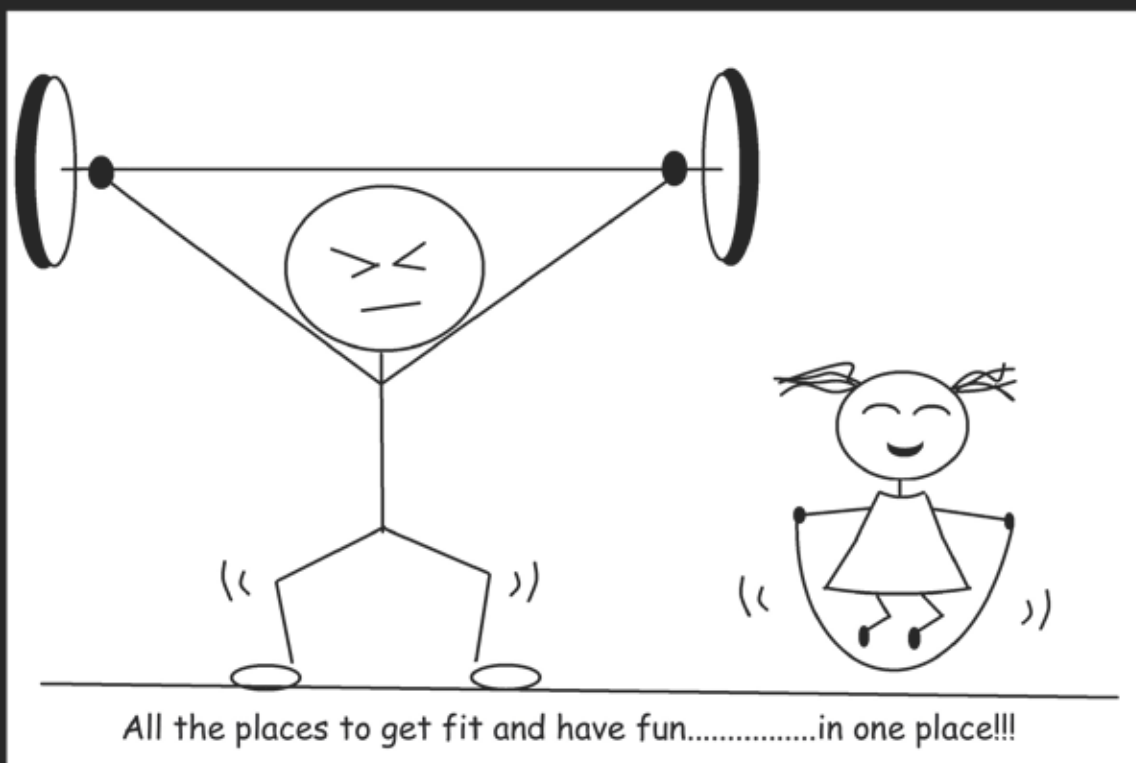
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Storm Drainage Project Meeting

Continued from front page

that if he had to do it all over again it would have done some things differently. The project includes installation of a storm drain pipe down Bull Creek Road, Nasco Drive and White Horse Trail. It also includes the construction of curbside inlets on various streets and two outfalls on Shoal Creek: one near the intersection of Bull Creek Road and Shoal Creek Boulevard and one near the intersection of Rickey and Bullard Drives. Along the way, however, the project expanded to include replacement of water and wastewater lines as well as the curbs along parts of the route. These additions are clearly needed, but unfortunately were not included in the original plan.

The city is currently working with the contractor on a schedule to speed up the work – to get it completed in April as opposed to June or July. They hope to achieve this by splitting up the reconstruction/repavement of the streets into two project sections and reconstructing them simultaneously.

Getting the project done sooner is wel-



Storm drain work on Bull Creek just north of Allandale Road

comed; however, neighbors at the meeting want to know the specifics. As the meeting proceeded a number of issues, concerns, and frustrations came up. There was tension in the room. I could see one man's lips quiver as he questioned the contractor's (Texas Sterling's) experience with similar projects. "How could they not know they were going to encounter rock when digging the trench for the culverts?"

The demand for specifics was symptomatic of the resident's frustration. The message was: "tell us what you are going to do and when you are going to do it," with the clear implication that they were going to be held to it.

Communication on the project has been lacking. The weekly updates

that are sent electronically to an email list and are posted to the neighborhood List-Serv and website don't get to all of the people on streets where the work is being done. Also, the information provided doesn't give enough detail like when machinery is going to be parked in front of a resident's driveway.

Other frustrations conveyed at the meeting had to do with construction debris in people's yards, installation of a 20'x40' monster inlet in a neighbor's front yard, concern that Fire and EMS are not being kept informed of project status in the event of an emergency, what the maintenance schedule is going to be on the drainage system, compensation for damage done to property like a cracked sidewalk, handling garbage pickup when the road is closed off, and more.

The city will be following up with notes from the meeting, including answers to people's questions. We will continue to post what we know to the list serve and the website www.allandalereporter.org/allandale. ❖

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The Current Allandale Executive Committee

Donna Beth McCormick

At the October called general meeting, the following people were elected to the Executive Committee:

Donna Beth McCormick, President; David Mintz, Vice President; and Karen Knight, Secretary. Diane Swinney is serving her second year as Treasurer. Board Members are Bryan Glass, Laura DiCarlo, Peggy Maceo, Jeff Marshall, Joi Chevalier, John Keohane, and Dan Diener. Cynthia Keohane is the Immediate Past President.

The general election was held as scheduled in September. However, our program and discussion were lengthy and people left before the election; and, not having a quorum present, officers could not be elected, thus the reason for the called meeting in October. A quorum was present at that time and officers were elected.

The November meeting was a planning meeting. There were many other outside

meetings relating to neighborhood issues that members were attending, so there was not a quorum. We discussed plans for the year, committees that needed to be appointed, how to get the neighborhood more involved in fun events other than the scheduled parade and garage sale, and trying to review the picnic or something similar. We solicit your ideas and, of course, your involvement in putting these events in motion. ❖

It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year – renewal time

Dan Diener

It's that time of year, again: Black Friday, Cyber Monday, sales, sales, sales. Add one more great buy to your list. In fact, this is best buy of the year – your Allandale Neighborhood Association Membership.

Your ANA membership runs from January 1 to December 31. If you have

joined or renewed since September 1, we have automatically updated your membership for 2012. If not, your membership is due to expire on January 1, 2012.

It's your best present to yourself since you get all the benefits of neighborhood news, crime watch updates, local events, neighborhood advocacy, etc. All for only \$15.00 per year per household or \$7.00 per year for senior households.

If you are not sure when you joined or renewed, don't worry. We will be sending a letter next week to all members who are due to renew. Just fill out the enclosed form, stick it in the enclosed envelope, and send it back – done.

If you think your membership is due for renewal you can visit the newsletter's website, at www.allandalereporter.org/allandale, go to ANA Membership, and click to renew. You will be taken to our PayPal account.

So, watch your mailbox for the renewal letter or go online. Either way is great. Don't let your membership lapse. The more membership households we have, the better our representation will be. ❖

Allandale! Happy Holidays Everyone !



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City of Austin Permanent Supportive Housing Meeting

Cynthia Keohane

The City of Austin is formally committed to dispersing affordable housing in all parts of town – North, South, East, and West. Toward that goal, Mayor Pro-Tem Sheryl Cole and Council Member Laura Morrison led a discussion Thursday, November 17, centered on creating a framework for neighborhood engagement for proposals for permanent supportive housing.

The overflow crowd included Maurice Anderson, ANA member and me from Allandale, along with others who are active in their respective neighborhoods.

Participants pre-registered and were assigned to a table with people from other parts of the city.

City staff provided a brief overview of Austin's Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) initiative.

Here's key information from the City of Austin website, <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/housing/psb.htm>.

"On March 25, 2010, the Austin City Council passed an historic resolution directing staff to develop a strategy that would prioritize the City's affordable housing resources - including federal and

local monies - for permanent supportive housing (PSH). The unanimous action was the result of several interconnected initiatives that culminated in Austin elected officials pledging to create 350 units over the next four years for residents most vulnerable to homelessness, those who have incomes at or below 30 percent of the median family income (MFI); by 2010 federal standards, a single person earning at or below \$15,550 annually."

Staff stated that as of the meeting, 44 PSH units are operational, 121 are "in the pipeline," and 121 are needed to meet the 350-unit goal.

I asked what the "supportive" means in permanent supportive housing and who provides support. Staff stated that while PSH is developed by a developer, the support for the residents is provided by a non-profit agency.

After the overview, participants were assigned discussion items. Key topics were how to provide geographic dispersion and how to engage the neighborhoods. The engagement may include "Good Neighbor" guidelines intended to facilitate communication between affordable housing developers and surrounding neighborhoods. Guidelines may address issues such as property maintenance and appearance, community safety, communication, and agreement monitoring and compliance.

Staff is pulling together the recom-

mendations and will post them on the city website.

More information is available at http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/housing/downloads/psb_update_memo_lumbreras_oct2011.pdf. ❖

Status of Comprehensive Planning Process "Imagine Austin"

Cynthia Keohane

Imagine Austin, the Austin Comprehensive Plan project, is wrapping up public input on the draft plan. Stakeholders were given a variety of options to provide input on the draft document, including a launch meeting at Carver History Center and online surveys including a prioritization survey. I attended the launch party and took the opportunity to look at the proposed Growth Concept Map with Greg Claxton, a staff planner.

Many concerns about the plan remain. Some developers say the plan is too vague, and they cannot tell how to proceed with a project. Neighbors who have worked for years to develop their local neighborhood have not received assurance that their plans will not be "trumped" by the Comprehensive Plan.

The City Council is expected to vote on the plan in Spring of 2012. ❖

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Urban Patchwork Farm Tour

Tom Linehan

On Sunday, November 13, Urban Patchwork Neighborhood Farms and Slow Food Austin teamed up for a tour of four neighborhood farms in North Central Austin.

Urban Patchwork (UP) was started in 2009 by Paige Hill (see photo). It partners with homes around the North Central Austin area to grow vegetables and eggs for its members, in the process teaching members how to grow food in the city. UP currently operates farms in three neighborhoods: Crestview, Wooten, and Cherrywood.



A front yard garden at one of the Tour stops

The tour started at the first urban farm on Duval, where we were introduced to the Urban Patchwork team, given a map of the other three farm locations, and sent on our way to tour the other sites. The four farms on the tour were not within walking distance, but were a fairly easy bike ride. Fortunately, the weather was good – a little warm for a mid-November day, but suitable for the outdoor event.

Urban farms are people's yards, complete with compost piles, chickens and gardening tools. Two of the farms had plots in the front yard. At first glance, it just looks like a big garden. However, what you learn on the tour is these gardens are carefully designed food production systems built and maintained by an evolving community of urban farmers that draw on the experience and knowledge and support of Urban Patchwork.

And why not an urban farm? I'd rather spend money on water for something I can grow to eat. St. Augustine be gone!

Now before you get out the tiller, be prepared. The one thing I came away from on the 2 1/2 hour tour is a deeper appreciation of the thought and work involved in farming, even if it is on a relatively small plot. There are many facets to it. You may want to start with a simple backyard garden to get your hands dirty before turning it into a farm.

Farming efficiently is all about getting the nutrients that plants need to grow human food and converting the scraps back to plant food, all the while letting nature do as much of the work as possible. For example, chickens are a great source of fresh eggs, but they also contribute to the health of a garden by rooting out grass and weeds, eating insects, and fertilizing the soil. Efficient gardening is letting the chickens do the work so you don't have to.

The folks at Urban Patchwork are constantly experimenting with ways to do it better, particularly in these extreme drought conditions. On the Farm tour we were shown drip irrigation, wicking systems (where the garden is watered from the bottom up), aquaponics (a hybrid hydroponics/aquaculture system), a compost tea brewer, a hugelkultur spiral garden (raised beds filled with rotting wood) a worm compost bucket, and other clever tools and approaches to gardening.

The last part of the Urban Farm tour took place back at the starting farm on Duval, where the group gathered around a table to watch a demonstration of yaupon holly leaves being crushed, roasted and made into a tea. If you're a tea drinker, you won't have to go far to find yaupon holly plants in the area. One of the sponsors of the tour was Dripping Springs Vodka. Volunteers helping out with the tour prepared a vodka



drink with prickly pear syrup for the adults to sip while watching a demonstration on how to shave, peel, mash and cook prickly pears to extract the bright purple, almost fluorescent, juice.

At the conclusion of the tour, we were given a virtual goody bag with a napoles pad, a little jar of prickly pear and wild



Paige Hill

plum jam, yaupon holly leaves, and recipes. It was a great afternoon on the farms. You can learn more about Urban Patchwork Neighborhood Farms at their website: www.urbanpatchwork.org. ❖



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Want to be an ANA Active Member?

Joe Reynolds

Allandale is full of interesting and engaging neighbors. We have a comprehensive cross section of leadership in Austin. The Neighborhood Association would like to tap that talent pool. Each year with the membership renewal form there is a volunteer section where folks can check that they are interested in helping in various ways. We've not made good use of that resource pool. Partly the areas to check off are outdated; partly when volunteers are needed the time to act is so short that "just do it" becomes the default response. This leads to a very small group of neighbors doing almost all the work of the association. That's not good because it means that their views of what we ought to do becomes the default, and potentially better choices are

not considered.

I'd like to encourage wider active participation by our neighbors. If you actively join in then there's no need to search you out under a deadline, and you get to make the "list" of volunteer areas. This year we'll have board members with the responsibility of integrating new volunteers in our events and areas of effort.

Some areas where we need help are with the fun activities that ANA organizes each year, like the July 4 Parade, which is the longest running in Austin, and the Neighborhood Picnic and Concert, which was skipped this last year because we couldn't find a critical mass of folks to organize and run it.

Then there are service areas, like caring for our park, watering (when the city

refuses), clean-up and repair, care for Shoal Creek, and coordinating neighbors with disruptive activities like storm drain installation.

Finally there are tasks of "housekeeping" quality that are essential to all the others, like putting out the corner signs for announcements or helping with the newsletter.

We need to pass to a new group of volunteers the essentials to a successful July 4 Parade, the obligatory regulatory and permitting steps for a picnic, and the City contacts for public activity. I've been part of all these ANA activities. It's fun and satisfying. I'll help you join in, and you too can "Follow the Elephants." ♦

ALLANDALE IS WIRED

Current Allandale Listserve Membership: 1190+ (see Allandale web site, www.allandalereporter.org on how to join)

Average number of daily visits to the Allandale web site: 60

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Meet Bryan Glass, ANA Executive Committee Member

Tom Linehan

How long have you been in Austin and in Allandale?

I have lived in Austin for the past 7 1/2 years, all in Allandale. When we moved here from Chicago we loved the feel of Allandale, a nice leafy suburb of the city that was still very close to downtown.

What made you decide to join the ANA Executive Committee?

I was worried about Allandale changing from the leafy suburb feel to a mini-metropolis dominated by multiple-family apartment buildings, duplexes, and condominiums. Allandale gives Austin charm and makes it one of the greatest places to live in the United States. I wanted to help uphold that.

How long have you been involved with the neighborhood association and in what capacity?

I have been involved on and off for the past four years. I started by attending

a few neighborhood association meetings and then became a block captain about three years ago.

If you had a good friend visit from out of town and this was their first time to Austin, where would you take them?

Always a difficult question. There are so many great things about Austin. A trip to Sixth Street is usually on the schedule, but if they only had time for one thing I would prefer to take them for a drive on 360 through the hill country just as the sun is setting. It is magnificently beautiful at that time and really sets Austin apart. If they are more into food, a trip to the Salt Lick is always a safe bet. I'm not much into live music, but there's plenty to choose from for my friends who enjoy that type of thing.

Who are some of your favorite music artists at this time?

My favorite group is Pink Floyd, but they haven't played live in a long time. I saw them in concert in 1994 during the Division Bell tour and they sounded even better in person than on their recordings. This really impressed me and to be honest I've never found another group to



ANA EC member Bryan Glass

rival Pink Floyd. The closest would be Moby, but I'm not sure how active he is nowadays. ❖

Allandale Resident's 94th Birthday

Christine Lehmann



Lucile Miller on her 94th birthday

Some neighbors celebrated Lucile Miller's 94th birthday on November 8. Lucile has lived on Silverleaf Drive for more than 40 years. She is in amazing health and takes a walk down our street every day. ❖

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New Trees at Lamar Middle School

Steven Zettner

Lamar Middle School's new gardening club, Grow It Yourself, planted two trees in front of the gym on December 1, with help from local non-profit Sustainable Neighborhoods (SN).

The trees will shade a new student pick-up area. The school plans to install seating for the area as well.

Students will water the trees during the school year, and SN will organize a rotation of local residents to water once a week during the summer months for the first two years.

If you would be interested in helping to water the trees a few times next summer, please contact Steven Zettner at zettner@snaustin.org. The exact schedule will be flexible and will be posted online. ❖



Tree planting at Lamar Middle School, December 1, 2011

New Sidewalks Installed on Burnet, Koenig

Steven Zettner

The City of Austin Public Works in November filled sidewalk gaps on Burnet Road near Northcross Mall and on the south side of Koenig Lane from Burnet Road going east towards Arroyo Seco.

The City has also made improvements to existing sidewalks on the east side of Burnet south of Koenig.



Sidewalk under construction heading west of Burnet and Koenig intersection

The sidewalks on Koenig are of particular importance, creating a link for pedestrians and bicyclists from residential streets in south Brentwood to the HEB grocery store, Lamar Middle School, several private schools and daycares, bus stops, and other retail destinations. This sidewalk was one of a dozen or so projects approved for the 2011-2012 season using funds from the 2010 Mobility Bond package.

The Austin Transportation Department is currently studying Burnet Road from Koenig all the way north across 183 to MoPac. The study, which concludes early next year, will lead to recommendations for new connectivity projects. Presumably this will include filling in additional sidewalk gaps, installation of ramps, and pedestrian safety improvements that make it easier for local residents to reach local businesses and destinations without driving. ❖

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Update on Sound Walls along Great Northern

Tom Linehan

As part of the MoPac Improvement Project plan to relieve congestion along MoPac from Parmer Lane to Cesar Chavez, Allandale residents who live near the highway were allowed to vote on the construction of sound walls between the highway and the neighborhood. In early November, the Austin City Council voted for the sound walls that had been approved by those neighbors. The vote was 6-0 with council member Mike Martinez off the dais. The City Council vote was the next step in the process before any work can get started on construction of the walls.

There are two sound walls of particular interest to Allandale residents. Sound Wall #2, along Great Northern between Pinecrest Drive and Foster Lane, was voted down by the adjacent property owners. The adjacent property owners voted for Sound Wall #3, which will run along Great Northern from the Far West

Pedestrian Bridge south to 2222.

The sound walls are part of the environmental assessment piece of the MoPac Improvement project, which is now under review by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The City Council's approval of the sound walls was necessary because the walls would be constructed in the City's right-of-way.

If the FHWA agrees with the MoPac Improvement Project team's recommended plan for addressing congestion along this section of MoPac and approves the environmental assessment, which includes the sound walls, the plans will be presented at a public hearing in the Spring. The feedback from the public hearing will be factored into the overall decision on whether to move forward with construction of the project. If the project moves forward, the sound walls would be constructed in 2013/2014. ♦

Neighborhood Watch

Laura DiCarlo



In addition to summarizing the crime stats in Allandale since the last newsletter, I'd like to remind everyone that as the holidays approach we should be mindful of protecting our possessions.

December is a big month for shopping and for going out of town, both of which create targets for would-be burglars. When shopping at multiple stores, always make sure your purchases are hidden in your trunk before you drive to your next location. Do not hide parcels after you have arrived at your destination, as someone may see you doing this and know they are there. Likewise, break down large boxes from TVs, computers, etc. before recycling them so they fit in your blue bin. Boxes lying next to your recycling bin let everyone know you have those items in your home.

Leaving for the holidays? If possible, put your Christmas lights and at least one

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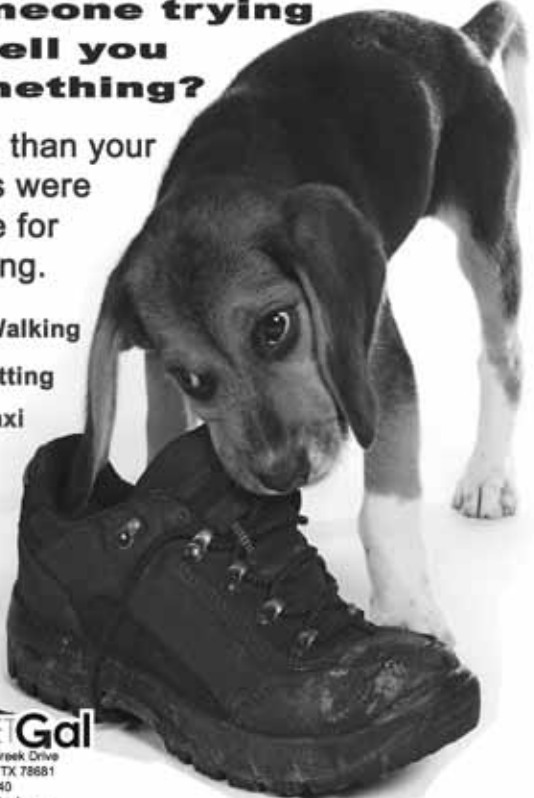
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light at your house on a timer so it will give the appearance of someone being home. Make sure a trusted neighbor is checking on your house, as handbills and newspapers are a surefire way for burglars to know you are out of town.

The holidays are joyful for some but very difficult for others. Burglaries may go up in December as people who are low on cash may steal in order to obtain presents for others. You may feel the desire to give at this time of year, but make it on your terms – lock all doors and windows and hide all possessions.

Since the newsletter was published in October, we have had about 10 thefts, six Burglary Of Residences (BORs), and a spike in Burglary Of Vehicles (BOVs). We have had issues with credit cards, graffiti, and more talk about handyman Rick Mojica (he is to be avoided, and please call 311 and file a police report if he has ever scammed you). The most concerning situation was the aggravated robbery by assault that occurred on October 20.

An elderly woman was sprayed with pepper spray and had her pursed stolen in front of Covenant Presbyterian Church by a Hispanic female assailant in

her mid-20s. According to Covenant Presbyterian Administrator Frederick Clement, the police said this was a crime of opportunity, in which the assailant knew the victim had money in her purse. Mr. Clement said the church is installing security cameras and more lighting in an effort to make it as safe a campus as possible. A few auto thefts, which are also unusual in Allandale, also took place in October

There was just one BOR in November (on November 22, in the 5500 block of Woodview), but there were five in the month of October – on Great Northern Boulevard, North Loop, Carlisle, Montview, and Westfield, all but one of them during the day. The door was kicked in during the break in on Carlisle. As I have mentioned before, three-inch screws in your strike plates make all the difference in how quickly and easily someone can enter your house. Harden the target and install three-inch screws in all outside doors.

BOVs were up in October, partly because of a spree on Cary Drive on Halloween evening, where three cars were hit. There was lots of talk about this on the Allandale ListServ because it was

determined that in each of these cases the car had inadvertently been left unlocked. However, there were several cases mentioned on the ListServ in which cars were locked and were still broken into. We know we should always locks all doors and park in a garage or as close to the house as possible, in an area with a motion light; but we also know this is not foolproof.

BOVs also occurred on Northcross, Park View, Pinecrest, Shoalwood, North Loop, Nasco, Lexington, Whitepine, Bullard, Hunt Trail (attempted), and Shoal Creek Boulevard. If you live on one of these streets and did not hear about the burglaries it's probably because you either don't have a block captain or because you are not on the email list. Please remedy this if you can. Please contact me if you live in the apartments on Northcross or North Loop, as there is always activity in these locations and we do not currently have block captains in place.

The ListServ was set abuzz in November with talk about MasterCards and American Express cards being compromised at the Chevron on Anderson and

Continued on page 14

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Neighborhood Watch

Continued from page 13

Rockwood Lane. Our APD District Representative Officer Gary Griffin talked with the owner of the gas station at the end of November. Officer Griffin encouraged everyone whose card has been compromised to file a report through 311.

Some of you may have seen the front page article in the Statesman about Barton Hills patrols. Kudos to John Luther, who trained the Allandale patrols as well. A couple of weeks ago John, North Shoal Creek's Mary Arnett and I trained a few patrols in Crestview as well. We have not been patrolling very much in Allandale, and I don't believe we are making much of a difference with our current program. Please let me know if you would like to get involved and perhaps we can inject new energy into our patrolling!

For more information about Neighborhood Watch or to sign up for patrol or block captain training, please contact me at 323-6929 or lhdcarlo@yahoo.com. Thanks and Happy Holidays! ❖



Livestrong Austin Marathon Sunday, February 19, 2012

Heads up! The Austin Marathon will be coming through the neighborhood Sunday morning, February 19, 2012. Race organizers are projecting 20,000 runners (includes the half-marathoners) for the race that starts and ends downtown. Start time is 7:00 a.m. The course will remain open and supported until 2:00 p.m. The first runners are expected to start coming through Allandale at 45th and Bull Creek around 8:00 a.m. Race organizers anticipate most of the runners will be through Allandale by 1:30 p.m. What follows are some points race organizers provided to the neighborhood association:

- Burnet Road will only be interrupted at Northcross Drive at St. Joseph's. The first runners shouldn't arrive at that point in the race until 8:35 or so, at the earliest. After 8:35, and until a little after 12:00, the police at that intersection will be letting traffic through as gaps in the runners allow. The longest wait times will be between 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.
- Hancock will have two-way traffic, with access controlled by an APD officer, on the north side of the street.
- People in the area bounded by White Rock, Shoal Creek, and Northland will

have complete access to Northland via Bullard Drive, Marilyn Drive, and Louise Lane. From there they can take Northland/2222 west to MoPac.

- Residents west of Bull Creek, between Hancock and 45th, will have access to both Hancock and 45th by driving south on Bull Creek to 45th to get to MoPac. Runners will be in the north-bound lanes.
- Residents east of Shoal Creek and south of Foster/Northcross/St. Joseph's who need to get out of the course's loop can access MoPac without ever encountering the course, by taking Burnet to 45th to Lamar to 29th to MoPac.
- Residents who live right on or near the route and know they will need to get out during the race should consider parking their cars just on the other side of the route. For example, if you live on the south side of Foster, you could park your car on the north side of the street. It is understood this is not an option for the mobility impaired.

This same information will be posted to the Allandale website (www.allandalereporter.org/allandale/) closer to the race date along with a map of the race course to

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Gullett Good News

Stephanie Schulz

Gullett Students Celebrate Successful Fall

Gullett's Holiday break starts on December 20. Before the students take off to celebrate the season, they've got a lot of learning and playing to do.

Holidays in Harmony, the Geckos' holiday concert, was held December 12 and 13. Gecko first graders and the school's choir tuned up to sing for their friends on Monday, then turned around and sang for parents on Tuesday.

Speaking of holidays, The Geckos will go as a group to the Nutcracker on Saturday, December 17, at 2:00 p.m. Though tickets had to be purchased by November 30 to benefit from a 25% group discount, everyone from the Gullett community and the neighborhood is welcome. The Nutcracker, a magical holiday performance, will be even more fun to watch when our Geckos are sur-

rounded by their Gullett classmates, families, and teachers. And, said Gullett librarian Kay Gooch, "We can all dress up in our holiday sassiest!"

If you have a question about the Nutcracker, contact Laura Beck at laura@stripedshirt.com. This is the first in a series of activities that the Gecko community will plan to get families and neighbors involved in the arts. Look for another event this spring during the Silent Auction.

Zero Waste Thanksgiving

Parents, grandparents, sisters, brothers and more fun visitors came to lunch with their favorite Geckos on Wednesday, November 16, to celebrate Thanksgiving. All were treated to turkey and the fixins', and of course pumpkin pie. Yum!

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Gullett Good News

Continued from page 15

"I don't get the hot lunch," said one second grade boy who was eating a Schlotzky's sandwich. "But I love the pumpkin pie!"

The unique thing about this year's Gecko Thanksgiving lunch was that all of the food and utensils went into the school's commercial compost. "We diverted hundreds of pounds of waste from the landfill," said Laura DiCarlo, the school's green champion. "This means the nutrients will go back into the earth, and less methane will be released into the atmosphere." (Methane is a greenhouse gas 20 times more effective at trapping heat than carbon dioxide) Gullett continues to be a green school in many ways, including paperless take-home folders and multiple recycling and composting options around the school.

To the Book Fair and Beyond

The Geckos took off to what seemed like another planet on November 14-18, the week of this year's book fair. The library was decorated with rockets, planets and rather odd-looking alien librarians. Ms. Buzzella was the substitute for three days during the book fair. She had a green face and silver clothes, and the kids truly missed Ms. Gooch.

But all were happy to be at the book fair for the Wimpy Kid pre-release party. During the week, hundreds of copies of the book were sold; and so far, the Gecko reviews are thumbs up!

"It was funny, same as the other ones, but they are all good. I read it in one sitting," a fifth grader reported, "and then I bought it for my cousin for Christmas. Girls and boys like this book!"

And while the Wimpy Kid was a hit, so was having the book fair a week early. "I've always wanted to do the fair sooner," said librarian Kay Gooch. "This is a great week to have it; the Thanksgiving lunch brought in lots of traffic."

Carnival is Spooktacular

Gullett's spooktacular fall carnival, held on October 29, was a huge success. Carnival organizers offered 24 activities, games and booths; eight delicious food options; and used 37 cans of colored hair spray. Gullett sold nearly 800 drinks; gave away 150 cans of Pringles; and had more than 160 volunteers. (In fact, one of our carnival coordinators, Laura Beck, was interviewed on the local news channel about how Gullett used VolunteerSpot to get more volunteers than the school needed!)

The biggest numbers of the day? Gullett made more than \$5,000 in ticket sales and – in its first cupcake only cakewalk – the Geckos gave away 1,000 cupcakes! Wow!

"It took this whole Gullett community coming together to make this carnival so successful. We appreciate everyone and what each person brought to the day. Lots of kids had a great time, which is the whole point of this event," said carnival organizer Jennifer Swinton.

Gullett Family Fun

Many Gullett families participated in a family fun night on November 18. Gullett Trivia proved very entertaining to participants, and some winners went home with games of their own. Our next Family Fun Night will be at Playland Skate Center on Wednesday, February 8.

Here's what the Geckos have to look forward to in December and January:

Monday, December 19 – Holiday parties in classrooms

Wednesday, December 21 – School holiday starts

Thursday, January 5 – Students come back to classes

Monday, January 15 – MLK Holiday

Wednesday, February 8 at 6 p.m. – Playland Skate Party

Feb. 17 and 20 – School holiday ❖

Dos & Don'ts of Daily Deals

Jan Triplett, Ph.D., CEO, Business Success Center

Have you been tempted to buy online coupons for spa treatments, restaurants, "boot camps," hair salons or any one of a huge variety of other tantalizing things for half price or less? Maybe you bought one but didn't use it. Maybe you threw it away because you didn't use it before the expiration date.



Online coupon vendors

Good news – you can still use it or at least get your money back. Do talk to the merchant because they really sold you a gift certificate, even if it was called a coupon by Groupon, Living Social, Google, Amazon or any of the other 40 providers in the Austin area or the over 500 providers nationwide.

It's a good chance the spa, restaurant, bakery, etc. didn't realize that this was a gift certificate. But, it is. You paid for it and under Texas and federal law it's your property indefinitely.

Yes, indefinitely. If you paid for the coupon, it falls under Texas' Stored Value Card Act and has to be treated just like any other gift certificate. So, like other gift certificates, the merchant has to honor it for five years. If you haven't used it in that time, it still belongs to you. But after that time it falls under Texas' Unclaimed Property Laws and the merchant has to turn over the total amount you paid to the Comptroller's Office. Then the Comptroller lists it at <https://txcpa.cpa.state.tx.us/up/Search.jsp> and you can claim it.

Do spread the word. Business attorney Jeanine Lehman and I have been presenting this information to business owners

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Daily Deals

Continued from page 17

for the last six months to help them stay compliant with the law and so they don't find themselves in violation of the Texas Deceptive Trade Practices Act. The damages can be huge, especially since damages are on a per instance basis. They are even higher if the purchasers were over 65 years old.

If you do buy these online coupons and give them as gifts, do help the merchant know that you were the original purchaser. Why? Because they have to track who used them.

Also, do the merchant a favor and don't violate the purchase rules. Most deals say that they are not to be combined with other discounts, and that multiple coupons may not be used at one time. The point of these discounts is to give you a good reason to try something or someplace new. Please, don't abuse it.

Sometimes, staff in these restaurants and spas don't collect or cancel the coupon. They should, but these are new to them, too. Please, don't use them again, even if you can. Please don't try to get something you didn't pay for.

Do be understanding if you have a coupon or happen to be there when there's a huge rush of people trying to redeem their coupon. Merchants are seeing "coupon bullies." These are people who push their way to the front of lines and are disrespectful of other customers and staff. Do be patient and well mannered.

If you didn't buy the coupon, please don't demand that the merchant give it to you for the same price. You may be their best regular customer, but please don't ask for what you don't deserve.

If you are a merchant and are considering using online coupons, you can learn more about your responsibilities by watching the Business Success Center's YouTube video "Do No Harm with Daily Deals" at <http://www.youtube.com/user/runitright#p/a/u/0/mmyXRmm-2mAA>.

If you are a consumer or a merchant with questions, please email me at triplett@runitright.biz. Ms. Lehman and I are also happy to give our presentation to any interested group.

Coupons can be good for business and good to help consumers save money. We just all need to understand the rules and do the right things. ♦

Dog Talk: Medication

Cheryl Silver csilver2@austin.rr.com
512.454.7219



Fortunate is the person who never has to give his or her dog medication. I have often wondered if dog guardians sometimes fail to follow the required dosing of medications because of the dog's resistance. Hopefully, this article will give you some helpful ideas. (One of my own dogs has a rather rare kidney condition and takes about 30 pills per day so I have had plenty of practice over the past 10 years!)

First, let's talk about affordability of medications. Many pharmacies sell commonly used medications for far less than the same medication costs at your veterinarian's office. It is perfectly legitimate to ask your veterinarian for a written prescription to take to the pharmacy. Personally, I get all of my dogs' medications at Costco*, but you can check prices at other pharmacies that you frequent (You do not need to be a member of Costco to get any prescription medication). Typically, pharmacies only carry human medications, but much of what your dog may take is a human medication. If your veterinarian prescribes something that is not a human medication, ask if there is a comparable human medication. A supportive veterinarian will happily accommodate your efforts to save money while caring for your dog and will also give you a written prescription to send in to an online pharmacy. (I find that KV Supply has good price.). Additionally, if your dog is on a medication long-term, be sure and ask your veterinarian to write a prescrip-

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Dog Talk

Continued from page 19

tion for a large supply rather than for just a month or two. This, too, will save dollars. I purchase soloxine, a thyroid medication, online for two of my dogs and get a bottle of 1000 at each order. The savings are significant)

Now, for some basics.

1- Follow the directions for storage and dosage of the medication. If scheduling the doses is problematic, discuss it

with your veterinarian.

2- Always ask your veterinarian about possible side-effects when starting a new medication, and watch your dog closely. One of my own dogs had an extreme reaction to a sulfa-based medication- (she was staggering and refusing food). —I reported it to my veterinarian immediately and we stopped the medication.

3- Be sure you ask about giving the drug with food or timing the dosage vis-à-vis feeding your dog. This can have profound effects on the effectiveness of the medication. For example, did you

know that thyroid meds should be given twice a day and should be concealed in foods that have no soy and low, low calcium. Peanut butter is a great choice. Also, the medication should be given one hour before a meal or three hours after a meal. When I started giving thyroid meds to my dogs this way, the dosages were reduced significantly because with the changes the drug was able to actually work much more effectively. (Previously I had hidden it in chilled canned dog food.)

4- "Delivery systems" for oral medications are key to getting your dog to take her medications willingly. Hiding meds in liverwurst (it doesn't take much) is often successful, but liverwurst does have a lot of salt so if your dog has kidney issues, talk to your vet about it. Pill pockets are a product on the market, but they will reduce the effectiveness of some medications. Chilled canned dog food that has a smooth texture is often well-received, especially if you give the dog a few "meatballs" first without medication and then slip in the one with the concealed medication. Having another dog sitting nearby who is also getting "meatballs" will spur the dog who needs the pills to compete for the meatball. Be sure you are touching the pill minimally because the taste of the pill may come off onto the food you are using to conceal it.

Contact me for many more tips. Also, remember that compounding pharmacies can formulate your dog's medication in a form that the dog will find enticing.

5- When giving oral medications, do not just toss the pills in your dog's food bowl. There is no way to ensure the medication gets to where it needs to be. Give it to your dog and be certain it is swallowed.

6- If you are called upon to put drops/meds in your dog's ears, I recommend that you carry the medication close to your body prior to administration. (Your pocket and bra are some ways to do this). This will take the chill off the medication so that the cold drops do not cause discomfort to an ear that is already sensitive. You might want to take your dog into the bathroom or the kitchen and smear some cream cheese, cheese whiz, liverwurst, etc. on the door of the fridge or of the bathtub and let your dog lick it off while you put the drops in.

7- If you are called upon to administer

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su-cutaneous fluids, you may find that using the yummy things mentioned in section 6 above will occupy your dog while you are giving the fluids.

8- Using medicated creams on a dog can be problematic, since the dog will try to lick the cream off. Ask your veterinarian about how long the cream must stay on to be effective; this will help you gauge how long you need to divert your

dog from the licking. A variety of strategies can help you re-direct the dog and/or prevent the licking. Putting a bandage using vetwrap on another part of your dog's body can be helpful. You can expect your dog to spend some time trying to pull the fake bandage off; and, during that time, hopefully, the cream will have soaked in. Cotton turtleneck t-shirts can be cut to fit over a dog's front legs to

keep cream in place. Of course, putting the cream on just and then immediately taking your dog for a walk can be helpful.

I have just skimmed the surface of this very important topic; do not hesitate to call and discuss a special situation with me. And do not skip the monthly heartworm medication that every dog in central Texas needs all year long. ❖

Booklice

Wizzie Brown

Texas AgriLife Extension Service

Booklice are given their name because they are often found among books or papers. They are small, soft-bodied insects with a pale color. Usually booklice are wingless. The head and abdomen are large, while the middle section (thorax) is narrow. Booklice have long, thread-like antennae. Nymphs, or immatures, look similar to the adults but are smaller and always lack wings.

Booklice have chewing mouthparts and

often feed on mold and fungi but have also been found to feed upon pollen, cereal, dead insect parts or paste and glues in book bindings. They can be found indoors in areas such as libraries, office spaces, areas with many cardboard boxes or any other area that may contain large quantities of paper. In homes they may infest pantry items such as flour, cereals, grits or grains. They thrive in areas that are damp or have high humidity.

There are no male booklice; females produce offspring parthenogenically (from unfertilized eggs). Females can lay up to 60 eggs during their lifetime. The life cycle—egg to adult—takes about 1-2 months (sometimes longer) depending on environmental conditions.

Cast skins and fecal material from large populations of booklice may cause the sensation of being bitten by insects for some people.

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Book Lice

Continued from page 22

Tips for managing booklice:

- Lower humidity using heaters, fans, dehumidifiers
- Vacuum up any accumulated debris that collects in the structure
- Discard infested food items or freeze at 0 degrees for 7 days
- Repair plumbing leaks & eliminate standing water
- Install a vapor barrier in crawl space area (if not on slab) & make sure crawl space has a good cross-flow of air
- Seal cracks & crevices around the outside of the structure ❖

Sprouts Farmers Market is closing

Tom Linehan

Sprouts Farmers Market, formerly Sun Harvest, is closing its store on Anderson Lane. According to a November 29 article in the Austin American-Statesman, the closing is the result of a recent merger that left the chain with too many stores too close together. The one on Anderson Lane is one of three they are closing in Austin. They will all be closed by December 18. What follows is a letter from Sprouts Farmer's Market in response to an inquiry from neighbors in Allandale asking them to reconsider:

Hello Jon,

Thank you for contacting us regarding your concerns. We understand that our loyal customers are disappointed to hear that we will be closing the Anderson Lane Sprouts. The news is as disappointing to convey as it is to hear-though, as

you will see below, it truly does make sense.

After our merger earlier this year with the 34 Henry's stores in CA and the 9 Sun Harvest locations sprinkled throughout Texas, we simply ended up with too many stores clustered too close together in Austin. That was not the intent of the merger; it was simply a byproduct. No natural foods retailer has anything close to six stores in greater Austin. Even Whole Foods, which has been headquartered here for 30 years, still only operates two stores in the market.

At the time the merger went through, we had hoped to keep all stores in Austin open. That's



Sprouts Farmers Market Closing

why we went to the trouble and tremendous expense of converting the signs and cash registers at the former Sun Harvest stores. But after studying the situation for seven months, it became clear that we could not overcome the real estate handicap of having stores that were as close as two miles apart. Since the least at the former

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Sun Harvest on Anderson Lane was ending on 12/31, and the site requires an enormous amount of behind-the-scenes renovations, and modernization, we decided to close that store. Our decision to close other specific stores was to retain the one that was most centrally located and happened to have the most loyal customer base. This store happened to be the former Sun Harvest store on South Lamar. Our intention was not to close the Sun Harvest legacy.

We are well aware that each of these stores has played an important role in its local community- especially the Anderson Lane stores which has been around for decades. That is a void that

our nearby stores cannot totally fill, even when many of the employees move over there from the closing stores. But, the greater good is to provide a long-term, stable, multi-faceted presence for Sprouts throughout the greater Austin, and in the considered judgment of many caring people here at Sprouts, this was the only way to achieve that goal without putting the entire market at risk.

We do not expect for you to necessarily agree with this decision, or to be happy about it; but we do hope you understand how much thought went into it. We do truly value your concerns and opinion. We also hope that you will visit the

same familiar employee faces that you are used to seeing at their new Sprouts locations.

I hope this information is helpful. Please let us know if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Raechell Brown
Customer Relations
Sprouts Farmers Market
11811 N. Tatum Blvd Ste 2400
Phoenix, AZ 85028 ❖

Allandale Resident Laura Pressley to run for City Council

Tom Linehan

As we go to press, neighborhood resident Laura Pressley, PhD just announced her campaign for Austin City Council. Laura has lived in Allandale for seven years, three years on Twin Oaks and 4 years on White Horse. Laura is the co-founder and principal at Pure Rain Bottled Rain Water. Pressley held her campaign kick-off event at Scholtz's garden on December 10th.

Another Allandale resident, former City Council member and cofounder of the Save Our Springs Coalition Brigid Shea was in the news as a possible candidate for mayor. As of this writing, no formal announcement had been made however, she filed paperwork naming Danette Chimenti, a member of the Planning Commission, as her campaign treasurer. ❖



Laura Pressley



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